Workplace Environment and Employees' Commitment: A Study of Ojokoro Local Council Development Area, Lagos State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Background of the study: Existing studies on the workplace environment have not paid much attention to the local government area in Lagos State, particularly Ojokoro Local Council Development Area (LCDA). This gap provided the rationale for the current study, which aimed to examine the level of relationship between workplace environments and its influence on employee commitment in the Lagos region, with a focus on Ojokoro LCDA. This study is grounded on the theoretical stances of social exchange and human relations.

Methodology: A descriptive survey research design was employed, selecting a total of two hundred and twenty-four (224) respondents through multistage sampling techniques.

Results: Findings revealed a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between the physical work environment and employee commitment ($r = .540$, $p < .05$). Additionally, a significant positive relationship was found between the information and communication system and employee commitment ($r = .685$, $p < .05$).

Conclusions: Based on the findings, it is recommended that the management of Ojokoro LCDA should continue improving the physical work environment to boost employee morale and commitment. Furthermore, Ojokoro LCDA's management should cultivate a workplace culture that encourages teamwork, as achieving targets together can make challenging tasks appear more manageable.

Introduction

The ability to attract, keep, motivate, maintain and realize employees' job commitment is important in today's organizational workspace. A widely accepted assumption is that better workplace environment motivates employees and produces better results. This affirms the position of Abdullah, Adenan and Zaiedy (2021) that workplace environment have a great impact on happiness in life and work skills that directly affect employee's work productivity. Workplace environment is made up of all the elements that can affect employee's day-to-day productivity such as size of the company, layout, location, lightning, furniture and fittings, air temperature and noise, organisation culture, as well as employee relations (Ahakwa, Yang, Tackie, Odai, & Dartey, 2021).

Other aspects of the workplace environment are the policies which include employment conditions, team work, information and communication system, management/leadership styles and supervisor support. According to Putra, Sutadi, Setyowati, and Hariyati (2020), healthy work environment begin with positive interpersonal relationships and respect between employees and the employers because positive alliance between these two major industrial relations actors will be favourable to creating a caring work environment. When employees lack in commitment it will lead to organization loose the most talented and capable workforce in the competitive market and may nail the coffin of the business (Princy & Rebeka, 2019).

According to Al Jabri and Ghazzawi (2019) employees with high commitment will contribute their energy and time to accomplish organization aims and objectives. Unfortunately, mental health disorders, such as depression, stress and anxiety, are some of the key challenges in today's work environment as a result of poor physical setting (Hansen, Bjoner, Xylakis & Pajuste, 2021). Similarly, Saidi, Michael, Sumilan, Lim, Jonathan, Hamidi and Ahmad (2019), confirmed that positive working environment is essential in ensuring employee productivity in order to avoid unnecessary stress to the employees thus affecting their commitment to work. This implies that an improper and unfavourable workplace environment leads to work stress and will affect employee job commitment and even the quality of goods or service render will decline (Shahnavazi, Eshkiki, Shahnavazi & Bouraghi, 2021).

Ira, Feri, Hijriyantomi and Pasaribu (2019) affirmed that work environment is everything that exists around employees and influence them in carrying out the responsibilities assigned. Nzewi, Chiekezie and Alphonsus (2017) asserted that environment is man's immediate surrounding which he manipulates for his existence and wrongful manipulation will bring about hazards that will make environment unsafe and hinder employee's performance and as well discourage their commitment. Badrianto and Ekhsan (2020) claimed that the first factor affecting organisation commitment is the work environment that is why they emphasized further that the amount of production by organisation must be supported by environment that is suitable to accommodate production activities.

Meanwhile, either public or private organisation, human resources are one of the main assets that determine success and the survival of organisation. Often times we have poorly designed workstations, unsuitable furniture, lack of ventilation, inappropriate lighting, excessive noise, insufficient safety measures in fire emergencies and lack of protective equipment as well as poor communication system. According to Zhenjing, Chupradit, Ku, Nassani and Haffar (2022), majority of the workplace environments in developing countries are not conducive enough to workers but as a result of high rate of unemployment and harsh economy they hardly complain. This affirmed the position of Ushie, et al., (2015) that the environment where people work, especially in Nigeria is unsafe, unhealthy and unfriendly. Lighting and other factors like ergomic furniture has been found to have positive influence on employees' commitment (Bankole, Aremo & Oderinde, 2017).

However, people working in such environment are prone to occupational disease and it impact on their commitment and performance (Chandrasekar, 2011). This implies that commitment is affected due to work environment. Many studies had been carryout on workplace environment and employee commitment at different organizational levels but there has been a scarcity of the study among local council development area in Lagos State, specifically Ojokoro Local Council Development Area. It is against this background this study examines relationship between workplace environment and employee commitment using Ojokoro Local Council Development Area of Lagos State, Nigeria as a point of reference.

The main objectives of the study are: 1. To investigate the relationship between physical work environment and employees' commitment in Ojokoro Local Council Development Area (LCDA) of Lagos State, Nigeria, and 2. to determine the relationship between information communication technology (ICT) and employees' commitment in Ojokoro Local Council development Area (LCDA) of Lagos State, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

HO1: There is no significant relationship between physical work environment and employees' commitment in Ojokoro Local Council Development Area (LCDA) of Lagos State, Nigeria.

HO2: There is no significant relationship between information communication technology (ICT) and employees' commitment in Ojokoro Local Council development Area (LCDA) of Lagos State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Concept of Workplace Environment

Various studies have been carried out on workplace environment as a factor that determines employees' commitment. In elementary economics, location of industry or workplace environment plays significant role in the survival of any business. According to Chukwu (2022) most organisations, particularly in Nigeria, believe that salary, or how much money they pay to employees' influences their commitment to work and loyalty. This affirmed the position of Onwuka (2002) that a lot of managers and supervisors, according have the belief that an employee's job commitment is linked to the amount of the employee's pay package. As production equipment is easier to influence because it follows human being instructions and requires no further incentives or motivations, human being are more complex and require a combination of elements such as pleasant and good conducive to affect their performance and commitment. The present work environment is extraordinary, different, and continually changing (Omoruyi & Amuen, 2022).

Components of Work Environment
Physical Work Environment

In the workplace, it is often assumed that employees who are more satisfied with the physical environment are more likely to produce better work outcomes. Positively and negatively, the physical

working environments will impacts employee morale, loyalty and commitment to the productivity and entire work system. The physical work environment in organizations includes the nature and arrangement of all the material objects and incentives or motivation that people come across in their day today work activities (Sander, Caza & Jordan, 2019). It is important to know that the environment is man's immediate surrounding which he manipulates for his existence and convenience.

Information and Communication Technology

The advancement and use of information technology have led to changes in approaches to business operations and ways of working (Musheke & Phiri, 2021). Hermawan and Suharnomo. (2020); Afolabi and Abidoye (2011) define information communication technology system (ICT) as the usage of electronic devices such as computers, telephones, internet and satellite systems to store, retrieve and disseminate information in the form of data, text image and others such as Bluetooth, NFC, Wi-Fi, and 4G that can operate to some extent interactively and autonomously. Information technolo¬gy in¬volves the integration of technology systems such as computer, mobile phones and other gadgets into organizations activities in order to enhance efficiency and commitment of the workforce (Hermawan & Suharnomo, 2020). Izma and Abdhy (2022) defines communication as a means through which the task and the resources needed to carry out task, the roles and duties and the expected results are made known to the subordinates.

Concept of Employees' Commitment

Employee commitment has been said to be beneficial for both the organization and its workforce as it can reinforce the feelings of belongingness (Azeem & Akhtar, 2014). According to Taborosi, Strukan, Postin, Konjikusic and Nikolic (2020), employee commitment refers to the feeling of responsibility that a worker has towards the goals, mission, and vision of the organization he is working with. Employees' commitment in the workplace is the bond employees experience with their organisation. Besides, Rae (2013) thought about employee commitment as a desire to maintain the affiliation with an organisation and is reflected through the willingness to apply high level of effort to achieve organisational goals. Employee commitment plays a critical role in determining whether an employee will stay with the organization for a longer period of time and work passionately towards achieving the set goals. (Awolusi, 2019). According to Miedaner, Kuntz, Enke, Roth & Nitzsche (2018) employee commitment reflects the loyalty of an employee towards his or her organization. It was also described by Meyer and Allen (1991) as the degree of attachment to an organisation and is characterized by valuing the shared benefits held between an employee and his or her organisation.

Components of Employees' Commitment
Affective Commitment

This is the emotional attachment an employee has towards the organization. Affection for job occurs when employee feel a strong emotional attachment to his/her organization. This aspect of commitment emphasizes that an employee has a high level of active commitment, and then the chances of an employee staying with the organization for long are high. Affective commitment also means an

employee is not only happy but also engaged in the organizational activities like, participation in discussions and meetings, giving valuable contributions or suggestions that will help the organization.

Continuance Commitment

This is the level of commitment where an employee would think that leaving an organization would be costly. This affirmed the position of Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) that continuance commitment attachment is both mental and emotional issue. In addition, possible reasons employee deciding to stay with organisations vary, but the main reasons relate to a lack of work alternatives (especially at this moment of economic crisis and employee's downsizing/loss of job and leading to high rate of unemployment in Nigeria) and remuneration (Liu, Gyabeng, Sewu, Nkrumah & Dartey, 2019).

Normative Commitment

Normative commitment is heavily grounded upon values and personal norms; for that reason, attempting to measure it presents unique challenges. This level of commitment occurs when an employee feels obligated to stay in the organization, where they feel, staying in the organization is the right thing to do. According to Onu, Akinlabi and Adegbola (2018), this type of commitment takes place when employee feels a sense of obligation to organization. Researchers have discovered that measuring normative commitment usually focuses on the extent to which a person believes he or she should be loyal and make sacrifices on behalf of the organization (Weiner, 1982). Take for instance, at Ojokoro local council development area (LCDA) employee may decide not to leave because there is job security and environment is friendly.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Many theories have been developed to explain the link between workplace environment and employee commitment. In order to have better understanding of this study, social exchange theory (SET) by Homans (1961), (1958), Blau (1964) and human relations theory by Elton Mayo (1933) and Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939) will be discussed to provide a better explanation. These theories will help us understand the relationship between workplace environment and employees' commitment in Ojokoro Local Council Development (LCDA) Area of Lagos State, Nigeria.

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET) is among the most influential conceptual models for understanding workplace behaviour. It is a theory that describes relationship as result oriented social conduct. It has been widely used as a primary lens to explain how employee perceptions influence job-related outcomes, individual attitudes and behaviours (Colquitt, 2001). According to this theory, people choose to go into relationships and maintain it in order to maximize the benefits of these relationships. For instance, if employees perceive that the cost of remaining in the relationship outweighs the benefits, they will withdraw from the relationship (Blakely, Andrews, & Moorman, 2005). Invariably, this theory states that people conduct a cost-benefit analysis in order to evaluate the risk and rewards that it would bring, once the risks outweigh the rewards, and then the relationship will end. Homans (1958), as one of

the founders of social exchange theory presented a concept of social behaviour that was based on exchange. In actual fact, he introduced the notion that exchanges are not limited to material goods (tangible) but also include symbolic (intangible) value like approval and prestige.

Human Relations Theory

This theory was developed by Elton Mayo (1933) and Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939). The theory believes in the importance of recognizing human beings and their needs as critical in achieving employee commitment and high productivity. Human relations theory is talking about a general approach to management that emphasises the importance of employee attitudes, interpersonal relationships, group dynamics, and leadership styles in achieving organisational effectiveness.

Methodology

According to the organization's human resources department, the population of the study will comprises of all permanent staff, non-pensionable and political appointee of Ijaye Ojokoro Local Council Development (LCDA) which is one thousand and twenty-two (1022) as at May, 2022, according to Human Resource Department. In order to avoid bias selection of the respondents' multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for sample selection. In the first stage, four categories of staff in the local government were purposively selected. In the second stage, respondents were selected from permanent staff, (junior and senior) non-pensionable and political appointee of Ijaye Ojokoro Local Council Development Area of Lagos State, Nigeria using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample determination table, to select two hundred and eighty-five (285) respondents which form the sample size. At the third stage, stratified sampling procedure was used to select the respondents from each stratum of the Local Council Development Area categories of workers (i.e. junior and senior, non-pensionable and political appointee). At the fourth stage, proportional sampling was adopted to allocate copies of the questionnaires to each of the four categories of staff using Rangan Kamaisan proportional allocation method. This is necessary to avoid a situation where any of the staff (group) will either be over represented or under-represented.

For the study, 12 items questionnaire for used for independent variable, also 24-items standardized questionnaire on employee commitment by Allen and Meyer (1990) was adapted for the second variable (dependent variable). The questionnaires were formatted on a 4-point response rating scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). After applying the test-retest procedure to the instruments, workplace environment reliability coefficients accounted for 0.75 while organizational commitment scale accounted for 0.85. The questionnaire was formatted on four (4) point Likert's format ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1).

The copies of the questionnaire were administered personally by the researchers, two hundred and eighty-five (285) copies of the questionnaire were distributed; two hundred and forty-two (242) copies retrieved but only two hundred and twenty-four (224) copies which represent seventy-eight point six five (78.5%) were certified valid and used for final analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for

Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 using correlation analysis to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

H₁: There is no relationship between physical work environment and employees' commitment in Ojokoro Local Council Development Area of Lagos State, Nigeria.

		PHYS_WKEV	EMLY_COMM
	Pearson Correlation	1	.540**
PHYS_WKEV	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005
	N	224	224
	Pearson Correlation	.540**	1
EMLY_COMM	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	
	N	224	224
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Table 01: The analysis was done at 0.05 level of significance.

Above result establishes the relationship between physical work environment and employees' commitment in Ojokoro Local Council Development (LCDA) area of Lagos State, Nigeria. The result shows the relationship was positive and statistically significant ($r=.540$, $p<.05$). The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between physical work environment and employees' commitment was rejected, which implies that there is significant relationship between physical work environment and employees' commitment. Therefore, as organisation make physical work environment conducive and attractive, the worker will emotionally attach to the job and Ojokoro Local Council Development Area of Lagos State, Nigeria.

H₂: There is no relationship between information and communication system and employees' commitment in Ojokoro Local Council Development Area of Lagos State, Nigeria.

		INFO_COMS	EMLY_COMM
	Pearson Correlation	1	.685**
INFO_COMS	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	224	224
	Pearson Correlation	.685**	1
EMLY_COMM	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	224	224
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Table 2: Correlation

Above result establishes the relationship between physical work environment and employees' commitment in Ojokoro Local Council Development (LCDA) area of Lagos State, Nigeria. The result shows the relationship was positive and statistically significant ($r=.685$, $p<.05$). The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between information, communication system and continuance commitment was rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between information communication system and employees' continuance commitment. In view of this, as organisation create room for effective communication between employees and management in Ojokoro (LCDA) staying and committed will be a matter of necessity to the workforce.

Discussion of Findings

This study examined the relationship between workplace environment and employees' commitment in Ojokoro Local Council Development area of Lagos State, Nigeria. From hypothesis one which states that there is no significant relationship between physical work environment and employees' commitment was rejected. The results revealed strong connection between physical work environment and employees' commitment in Ojokoro (LCDA), Lagos State, Nigeria. The result aligns with the work of Ferry and Mei (2021) that work environment influence organizational commitment. The results also corroborate the work of Bankole, et al., (2017) that physical work environment is strong predictors of employees' performance.

In view of this, there is need for management of Ojokoro LCDA to improve on provisions of better furniture and lightning and better air condition that will support the comfort of its employees at work so that it can increase their commitment level. As a result of the analysis, it shows that the respondents in the study are comfortable with the conducive environment they are enjoying at Ojokoro local council development area (LCDA) of Lagos State, Nigeria. In addition to this, the study conform with social exchange theory by Blau (1964) and Homans (1958) that conducive work environment will appeal to the conscience and loyalty of the workforce to show more commitment to the organisation because social exchange is based on reciprocity of kindness employer done to the employees'.

Second hypothesis state that there is no significant relationship between information, communication and employees' commitment was rejected. The outcome of the analysis established relationship between information, communication and employees' commitment because having access to right information and technology play a significant role in making work easy and bring about employee committed. In this case, having enjoying free flow of information and communication system in a friendly environment like Ojokoro (LCDA), the result of the analysis revealed that employees prefer to stay and continue to enjoy their work life in Ojokoro local council development area (LCDA).

The study supported by human relations theory developed by Mayo (1933), Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939). The theory believes in the importance of recognising human beings and their needs as vital in achieving employee commitment and high productivity. The result corroborated the findings of Syallow, Mberia and Bosire (2017) that organizational communication plays a vital role in ensuring employee job satisfaction. Equally, the study conforms to the studies of Ma (2022) that information significantly influences organizational commitment of English teachers in Lanzhou city of China. Also, Hakim (2021) revealed that information significantly influences organizational commitment among telecommunication industry in Kenya. In addition, the outcome of the study found relationship in Ushie, et al., (2015) study that work environment such as consistent communication flow and work place that is free from dangers are positively connected with employees' commitment.

This finding of all the analysis were in consistent with social exchange theory by Homan (1961) and Blau (1964) and human relations theory by Mayo (1933), Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939). For instance, social exchange relationships develop when employers "take care of employees as a way of creating conducive working environment that guarantee workforce safety," which bring about beneficial consequences. Also, the study aligned with human relations theory by Mayo (1933) and Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939). The theory is of the view that employee commitment can be increased through positive social bonds in the workplace and acknowledgement of the worker as partner in progress and it affirmed that putting in place conducive workplace environment through teamwork, free flow of

communication will bring about workforce commitment. Human relations school also believes that improving on the existing workplace infrastructure will bring about employee job commitment.

Conclusion

The study has been able to establish that workplace environment factors such as physical work environment and information and communication system relationship with employees' commitment. This is because the work environment is very important and can affect employees' self-esteem and commitment. Human beings are dynamic in nature hence, employers cannot influence employees' inner state directly, but they can create work environment that will enhance their commitment and bring out the best in them. In addition, work environment provides a sense of security and enables employees to work optimally. Finally, work environment affords a pleasant situation that will promote employee commitment and be loyal to their organizations.

From the conclusion of the study, it was therefore recommended that the following steps be explored in order to have a good workplace environment that will bring about employees' commitment:

i. The management of Ojokoro Local Council Development Area (LCDA) of Lagos State, Nigeria should keep improving on physical work environment in order to boost employees' morale and achieve their commitment.

ii. There is a need for management of Ojokoro local council development area (LCDA) to build a workplace culture where working in teams should be encourage because achieving targets together makes difficult tasks look easily achievable.

iii. Also, the management of Ojokoro Local Council Development Area (LCDA) should improve on information and communication strategies in order to enhance employees' commitment.

iv. Management of Ojokoro Local Council Development Area (LCDA) and other organizations should always ensure that workplace environment is pleasant enough to the extent that it will appeal to the conscience of the workers and encourage them to give their best to the council/organisation.

The study on workplace environment and employees' commitment was restricted to Ojokoro local council development area (LCDA) of Lagos State, Nigeria. Further studies can be carried out in another local council development area or local government area in Lagos State or in any of ministries, departments or agencies of the government. Similarly, a replication of this study in other contexts like the organized private sector (OPS) would reveal the significance of work environment and employee commitment and also identify more work environmental factors not covered in this study for insight.

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